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Remarks

Reconsideration of this Application is respectfully requested.

Upon entry of the foregoing amendment, claims 9-16 and 23-34 pending in the application, with claims 9, 16, 23, 24 and 27 being the independent claims. Claims 21 is sought to be cancelled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter therein. New claims 27-34 are sought to be added. These changes are believed to introduce no new matter, and their entry is respectfully requested.

Based on the above amendment and the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn.

Miscellaneous

Applicants wish to thank Examiner Landsman and Supervisory Examiner Kunz for their assistance during several telephone conferences. It is believed that the amended claims now recite language agreed upon during those discussions, that the language overcomes all outstanding rejections and that the claims are allowable.

Outstanding Rejections

In the Office Action of October 6, 2003 the Examiner rejected claims 9-16, 21 and 23-26 under 35 USC §112, first paragraph and 35 USC § 103. Applicants respectfully traverse all outstanding rejections.

Based on the amendments to the claims, the rejections are either moot or have been overcome. Therefore, all rejections should be withdrawn and the pending claims should be allowed.

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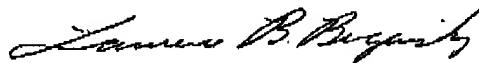
Conclusion

All of the stated grounds of objection and rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. Applicants therefore respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider all presently outstanding objections and rejections and that they be withdrawn. Applicants believe that a full and complete reply has been made to the outstanding Office Action and, as such, the present application is in condition for allowance. If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, the Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned at the number provided.

Prompt and favorable consideration of this Amendment and Reply is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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